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NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARTIES NOT INCLUDED IN ANNEX I TO THE CONVENTION

WORK OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARTIES NOT INCLUDED IN ANNEX I TO THE CONVENTION

Report of the Workshop of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

Note by the secretariat

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	3
	A. Mandate	1 - 4	3
	B. Scope of the report	5	3
II.	PROCEEDINGS	6 - 13	3
III.	DISCUSSIONS	14 - 52	4
	A. Work of the CGE task groups	14	4
	B. Technical and financial constraints affecting the completion of initial national communications by selected non-Annex I Parties	15	5
	C. Conclusions and recommendations of the workshop	16 - 52	6

		Paragraphs	Page
	Annexes		
I.	Agenda		11
II.	List of participants		13

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Mandate

1. At its seventh session, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 31/CP.7, decided that the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) shall have the objective of improving the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties (FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.4).

2. The COP further decided that, in addition to the mandate contained in the annex to decision 8/CP.5 (FCCC/CP/1999/6/Add.1), the CGE shall identify and assess technical problems and constraints that have affected the preparation of initial national communications by Parties that have yet to complete them and shall also provide input to the draft improved guidelines for the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties.

3. By the same decision, the COP decided that the CGE shall conduct two workshops in the year 2002, with the objective of sharing experiences to ensure adequate coverage of the issues referred to in paragraph 2 above. This is the report of the first of the two workshops.

4. The subsidiary bodies may wish to take note of the report, and provide further guidance to the CGE on the conduct of its work.

B. Scope of the report

5. This document contains a summary of the issues, technical problems and constraints relating to the preparation of national communications, in particular those that have affected the preparation of initial national communications by Parties that have yet to complete them (section II) and the discussions that followed on the preparation of various elements of a national communication by non-Annex I Parties, including recommendations for the improvement of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties (section III).

II. PROCEEDINGS

6. The CGE workshop was held in Bonn, Germany, from 10 to 12 April 2002. A total of 45 experts representing 41 Parties and two organizations[1] participated in the workshop. The workshop was supported with funding from the governments of the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States of America, and the Federal Republic of Germany through the Bonn Fund.

7. The workshop was chaired by Mr. Philip Weech (Bahamas), in his capacity as the current Chairman of the CGE. In welcoming the experts to the workshop, he recalled that the CGE had made considerable progress in the discharge of its work aimed at improving the process of preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties during the period 2000 to 2002. He also noted the excellent support provided by the secretariat to the CGE in conducting its work in an expeditious manner.

8. Mr. Weech noted that, since the completion of the CGE report (FCCC/SBI/2001/15) based on 50 national communications, submitted to the fifteenth sessions of the subsidiary bodies, the CGE, using its task groups on national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment and research and systematic observation, GHG abatement, and education, training and public awareness, had

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[1] See the list of participants in annex II to this document.

examined 27 additional initial national communications submitted to the secretariat as at 31 December 2001,[2] in accordance with its terms of reference.

9. He reminded participants of the objectives of the workshop, which included sharing experience relating to the preparation of national communications submitted so far, and facilitating the identification of technical problems and constraints affecting the preparation of initial national communications by Parties that have yet to complete them. The workshop would also assist the CGE in providing its initial input to the draft improved guidelines for the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties, prepared by the secretariat.

10. Four working group sessions were convened.[3] These working groups were facilitated by the coordinators of the CGE task groups and rapporteurs nominated by each of the working groups. Cross-cutting issues of information and networking and financial and technical needs and constraints, capacity-building and technology transfer were considered in each of the working groups as they related to their respective themes.

11. The workshop first focused on the presentation of reports by the coordinators of each of the CGE task groups based on their examination of main issues, problems and constraints relating to the preparation of the various elements of 27 national communications referred to in paragraph 8 above. Presentations were then made by seven of those Parties that had received funding more than three years ago and are yet to complete their national communications. Their presentations covered problems and constraints that have affected the preparation of their initial national communication. The Parties in question were Albania, Brazil, Fiji, Islamic Republic of Iran, Papua New Guinea,[4] Paraguay[5] and South Africa. Working groups went on to discuss their experience relating to the preparation of different elements of the national communication including the consideration of the draft guidelines. Finally, a closing plenary provided an opportunity for the working groups to present their main findings, conclusions and recommendations.

12. The recommendations of the working groups on improvements to the draft guidelines constituted the initial input by the CGE to the proposed improved guidelines for the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties, pursuant to decision 31/CP.7, paragraph 3(b).

13. The participants had for their consideration as background information presentations and reports of the CGE and its task groups and the presentations by experts from non-Annex I Parties that have not yet completed their initial national communications. In addition, the third compilation and synthesis of 52 initial national communications (FCCC/SBI/2001/14/Add.1), the preliminary compilation and synthesis of 27 newly submitted initial national communications and the draft guidelines for the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties, prepared by the secretariat, were provided.

III. DISCUSSIONS

A. Work of the CGE task groups

14. Presentations by the CGE task group coordinators covering information contained in the 27 additional national communications indicated that many of the issues, problems and constraints faced by

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[2] Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Dominica, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Maldives, Mongolia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niue, Panama, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago and Tunisia.

[3] See the agenda in annex I to this document.

[4] Papua New Guinea had submitted its initial national communication three weeks before the workshop.

[5] Paraguay submitted its initial national communication at the workshop.

non-Annex I Parties were similar to those that had been analysed and included in the previous reports of the CGE. These problems and constraints include the lack of activity data and emission factors, the lack of human and institutional capacity and the inadequacy of financial resources and technical support. However, in addition to these problems and constraints, the CGE also identified the following:

(a) Many Parties reported on emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO_2). Some Parties designed and used their own methods to estimate emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) from electricity generation in the energy sector and from the land-use change and forestry sector. One Party used the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories to estimate CO_2 emissions from clinker production;

(b) Vulnerability and adaptation issues are of major concern to non-Annex I Parties. Information provided indicated that further work is needed on integrated impact assessments (e.g. drawing linkages and/or dependencies between sectors) and on the evaluation and costing of adaptation options;

(c) Information presented on research and systematic observation indicated that many Parties have participated in a number of regional and global research networks and observing systems. Some Parties also indicated their plans to undertake specific scientific research on various climate change issues including the impacts, vulnerability and adaptation;

(d) Information provided by non-Annex I Parties on GHG abatement varied considerably. However, most Parties prepared their analysis based either on the national inventories or on socio-economic scenarios and many provided information on policy instruments and regulations (e.g. in forestry) which would contribute to mitigating climate change;

(e) Information on climate change education, training and public awareness was provided in varying levels of detail by many Parties. Most Parties did not provide any information on the number of sufficiently trained scientific and technical personnel. However, one Party (Cuba) indicated that it has sufficiently trained scientific and technical experts that will enable it to fully participate in the future processes of the UNFCCC;

(f) The reporting of information relating to financial and technical needs and constraints was an important element of the national communication process. Many Parties indicated their financial and technical needs to improve their capacities for formulating plans and policies to facilitate the integration and translation of climate change issues into sustainable development programmes.

B. Technical and financial constraints affecting the completion of initial national communications by selected non-Annex I Parties

15. Experts from the seven Parties referred to in paragraph 11 above made presentations on the problems and constraints that have affected the preparation of their initial national communications. From the presentations and the discussions that followed, it was clear that many of the technical problems and constraints affecting the preparation of initial national communications by non-Annex I Parties that had yet to complete them were similar to those that had been identified by those non-Annex I Parties that had already submitted them. However, a number of additional problems and constraints were noted in these presentations:

(a) The application of the modalities for the nationally executed programmes of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) not only inhibited the expeditious implementation of the activities for the preparation of initial national communication, but also contributed to the lack of clarity over the roles and responsibilities of, and cooperation between the UNDP Country Office, as an

implementing agency, and the national executing agency. The application of these modalities for nationally executed programmes by UNDP was in many cases contrary to the expedited procedures of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the preparation of initial national communications;

(b) The level of funding provided and the period allowed for the preparation of the initial national communication was not sufficient and in many cases, was not commensurate with the desire of some Parties to provide adequate information in the initial national communication;

(c) In many cases, the preparation of the initial national communication is a new activity which means that those who are responsible for this activity have had no prior experience. This can lead to, inter alia, low priority and commitment given by the relevant government agencies to the issue of climate change, lack of specific climate change expertise, poor coordination amongst government agencies and poor accessibility to relevant information;

(d) Problems related to changes in political structures and leadership (e.g. a change in government and leaders) can affect the institutional arrangements, thereby affecting the preparation of initial national communications.

C. Conclusions and recommendations of the workshop

16. The experts at the workshop, taking into account the presentations of the CGE task groups, selected non-Annex I Parties and background information provided by the secretariat, identified and discussed further issues, problems and constraints that have affected the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties, and concluded that they are similar to those included in the previous reports of the CGE. Experts discussed and agreed on the following conclusions and recommendations.

1. National greenhouse gas inventories

17. The participants at the CGE workshop acknowledged the validity of the issues, problems and recommendations related to GHG inventories contained in document FCCC/SBI/2001/INF.1. They agreed that there were however additional issues, problems and constraints that reflect the current situation relating to the preparation of national GHG inventories of non-Annex I Parties. These issues, problems and constraints are summarized below.

Institutional issues: preparation and reporting of inventories

18. The experts indicated that collection of activity data for the preparation of national GHG inventories provides the opportunity to integrate climate change issues into existing economic development plans.

Recommendations

19. The experts at the workshop considered that the appointment and designation of well-resourced technical coordinators or secretariats or technical focal points with a clear set of mandates is necessary for the preparation of national communications and national GHG inventories.

20. The experts insisted that national experts should be engaged and utilized in developing projects to collect activity data and develop country-specific emission factors in the relevant country-specific source categories (e.g. sugar cane processing, hydroelectric dams and fisheries). The methodologies used to collect and develop country-specific emission factors, and the results derived, should be published and included in the IPCC database.

Methodological issues: revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines

21. The experts noted that non-Annex I Parties generally did not use both sectoral and reference approaches to estimate and report on CO_2 emissions from fuel combustion. In the few cases where these two approaches were used, no explanation of any large differences between the two approaches was given.

Recommendations

22. In the light of the finding mentioned in paragraph 21, the experts suggested that non-Annex I Parties should be encouraged to estimate and report the emissions of CO_2 from fuel combustion using both the sectoral and reference approaches, and to explain any large differences between these approaches.

Recommendations for the improvement of the UNFCCC guidelines

23. The participants suggested that Parties should be encouraged to describe the procedures and arrangements undertaken to collect and archive data for the preparation of national GHG inventories, including information on the responsibilities of the institutions involved.

2. Vulnerability and adaptation assessment

24. The experts recognized a number of factors that have affected the preparation of vulnerability and adaptation assessments. These factors included: the lack of and difficulties with accessing funds from the GEF and other donor agencies, the low level of priority accorded to vulnerability and adaptation by policy makers at the highest levels of government, political instability, lack of national inter-agency cooperation and the lack of relevant data.

Methodological issues

25. The experts noted that socio-economic scenarios were useful when they were linked to climate change scenarios (including baselines). However the methodologies for assessing vulnerability and adaptation were considered to be weak for the health, tourism, water, energy and agriculture sectors.

26. The experts further noted that information on formulation of adaptation analysis, which includes evaluation and prioritization of adaptation options through cost-estimation and cost-efficiency analysis, was not evident in the national communications.

Recommendations

27. The experts suggested that Parties should be encouraged to provide more detailed baseline information in their vulnerability and adaptation assessments.

28. The experts also identified a need for appropriate tools and capacity to formulate adaptation strategies and measures, which could also be achieved through the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPA), adaptation policy frameworks and other similar programmes and policies. They further stressed that "no regret' options for adaptation should be emphasized.

Recommendations for the improvement of the UNFCCC guidelines

29. The experts at the workshop acknowledged that the draft guidelines on vulnerability and adaptation prepared by the secretariat provided an instructive framework for reporting of information on this issue. The experts recommended that the guidelines for the preparation of national communications

in general and for the preparation of vulnerability and adaptation assessment in particular should be simple, clear, focused and non-prescriptive.

30. The experts at the workshop were of the view that the implementation of the draft guidelines on reporting of information on vulnerability and adaptation would substantially increase the need for additional financial, technical and human resources.

31. The experts recommended that the draft guidelines on vulnerability and adaptation should be translated into all languages of the United Nations to enhance their utility.

32. The experts further noted that it is not possible to distinguish between the impacts of climate variability and climate change, so it is difficult to separate information relating to the impacts of current climate variability from information pertaining to impacts of climate change.

3. Greenhouse gas abatement

33. The experts at the workshop generally concurred with the conclusions and recommendations of the CGE workshops held between May 2000 and March 2001 on issues relating to GHG abatement.

34. In considering the information on GHG abatement provided in the 27 recently completed initial national communications, the experts noted that there was a tendency to include information on GHG abatement in a separate chapter within the national communication.

35. The experts noted that although there is no common framework for reporting on abatement options, most Parties provided information by sectors, including issues such as assumptions, scenarios, potential measures and policy investments. Only a few Parties reported on the status of abatement activities (for example, planned, ongoing or completed).

36. The experts noted that for many Parties the data available to undertake abatement analysis were incompatible with the data input requirements of the models used by some Parties and that the lack of institutional and project management expertise was a significant barrier to the implementation of potential GHG abatement options.

Recommendations

37. Those Parties that wish to carry out detailed abatement analysis are encouraged to consider the linkages between the emissions inventory and the assessment of the abatement options.

38. The experts noted with appreciation the UNFCCC technology clearinghouse web site (http://ttclear.unfccc.com/ttclear/security/UserLogin.jsp), which provides information on abatement technology, amongst other topics. The experts recommended that the CGE should review the section on abatement technology and evaluate its utility. The experts further recommended that the secretariat should invite Parties to provide feedback on the usefulness of the section on abatement technology.

Recommendations for the improvement of the UNFCCC guidelines

39. The participants recommended that there should be a clear definition of the terms "abatement" and "mitigation" in the new guidelines. They suggested that the guidelines should also provide improved guidance for reporting on the status of abatement options (e.g. planned, ongoing and/or implemented).

4. Research and systematic observation

40. In implementing decisions 14/CP.4 and 5/CP.5 on research and systematic observation, particular emphasis should be placed on the data needed for vulnerability and adaptation assessments, including the monitoring of climate change by using coral reefs as surrogate indicators of climate change.

41. There is a need to develop national climate change research programmes for the development of climate change scenarios, modelling, socio-economic and integrated assessments, and assessing the impacts of climate change on large-scale ocean-atmosphere circulation phenomena such as El Niño-Southern Oscillation and extreme events.

42. There is a need for better communication and dissemination of information from the climate change research community to the public at large.

5. Education, training and public awareness

43. The experts at the workshop acknowledged that many Parties already had existing initiatives and future plans to incorporate climate change into formal education programmes. Some Parties reported that they are using expertise within their universities and research institutions for these activities.

44. Training of scientific, technical and managerial personnel on climate change issues and enhancing their capacity to formulate climate change-related project proposals was considered by many Parties as an important element in the implementation of the Convention.

45. Raising public awareness on climate change issues is an important factor in enhancing public and other stakeholder participation and involvement in implementing climate change activities and programmes.

Recommendations for the improvement of the UNFCCC guidelines

46. The participants made several recommendations to the CGE on the draft guidelines for reporting on education, training and public awareness. These included the need:

(a) To make a reference to Article 6 of the Convention;

(b) To report on regional and/or subregional initiatives relating to education, training and public awareness;

(c) To include "non-formal" education.

6. Cross-cutting issues

47. Several recommendations relating to cross-cutting issues of information and networking and information relating to national climate change programmes in the draft guidelines were made by the participants of the workshop, including:

(a) The scope for reporting on information and networking could be broadened to cover other activities envisaged under Article 4, paragraph 1 of the Convention;

(b) There is a need to include a reference in the draft guidelines to the relationship between climate change and sustainable development programmes.

7. Financial and technical needs and constraints

National greenhouse gas inventories

48. Adequate funding should be provided for the preparation and updating of inventories, including those for country-specific emissions source categories on a systematic basis within the context of the preparation of national communications. Support should also be provided for the development of regional and subregional projects for the collection of activity data and development of emission factors.

Vulnerability and adaptation assessment

49. The level of funding from the GEF and other agencies for national communications needs to be increased significantly to allow for more comprehensive assessment of vulnerability and adaptation.

Greenhouse gas abatement

50. In order to improve the quality of studies and to facilitate the formulation and reporting of GHG abatement options, the participants reaffirmed the need for adequate financial and technological support for institutional strengthening as well as capacity-building in the use of methodologies, data acquisition and management, and development of mitigation scenarios. They also recommended that these needs should be taken into account in the implementation of the relevant decisions of the COP, including decisions 2/CP.7, 4/CP.7 and 7/CP.7.

51. The participants also noted with appreciation the additional guidance to an operating entity of the financial mechanism provided by the COP in its decision 6/CP.7 to provide financial resources to developing country Parties to develop and implement, as appropriate, prioritized projects identified in their national communications and recommended that the implementation of this decision should be expedited.

52. The participants noted with appreciation the establishment by decision 7/CP.7 of a special climate change fund to support and finance activities in areas including energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management.

Annex I

AGENDA

Wednesday, 10 April 2002

0830 – 0900	Registration and payment of DSA
0900 – 0910	Welcome and opening address *(Ms. Martha Perdomo, UNFCCC secretariat)*
0910 – 0920	Objective and procedures of the workshop (*Mr. Philip Weech*, Chairman of the CGE)
PLENARY I	
0920 – 0930	Adoption of the agenda and administrative matters
0930 – 1100	Presentations of the CGE task group reports on:

(a) Greenhouse gas inventories *(Mr. Ayité-lo Ajavon - Togo)*
(b) Vulnerability and adaptation assessment and research and systematic observation *(Ms. Isabelle Niang-Diop - Senegal)*
(c) Abatement *(Ms. Laurraine Lotter - South Africa)*
(d) Education, training and public awareness *(UNFCCC secretariat on behalf of Ms. Julia Martinez - Mexico)*
(e) Information and networking and financial and technical support *(Mr. Brian Challenger - Antigua and Barbuda)*

1100 – 1120	Coffee break
1120 – 1300	Presentation and discussion of problems and constraints of some non-Annex I Parties that have yet to submit their national communications:

(a) Albania *(Ms. Ermira Fida)*
(b) Brazil *(Mr. Jose Miguez)*
(c) Fiji *(Mr. Mahendra Kumar)*
(d) Papua New Guinea *(Ms. Gwendoline Sissiou)*

1300 – 1400	Lunch
1400 – 1450	Presentation and discussion (continued)

(a) Islamic Republic of Iran *(Mr. Mohamed Soltanieh)*
(b) South Africa *(Ms. Laurraine Lotter)*
(c) Paraguay *(Ms. Lilian Portillo)*

1450 – 1500	Guidance for working groups and selection of rapporteurs
1500 – 1520	Coffee break
1520 – 1800	Working group sessions

(a) GHG inventories, including capacity-building, financial and technical support, information and networking
(Facilitator: Mr. Ayité-lo Ajavon – Togo;
Rapporteur: Mr. Philip Acquah – Ghana)

(b) Vulnerability and adaptation, and research and systematic observation, including transfer of technology, capacity-building, financial and technical support, information and networking
(Facilitator: Ms. Isabelle Niang-Diop - Senegal
Rapporteur: Mr. Mahendra Kumar - Fiji)

(c) Abatement, including transfer of technology, capacity-building, financial and technical support, information and networking
(Facilitator: Ms. Laurraine Lotter – South Africa;
Rapporteur: Mr. Vute Wangwacharakul - Thailand)

(d) Education, training and public awareness, including capacity-building, financial and technical support, information and networking
(Facilitator: Mr. Brian Challenger – Antigua and Barbuda;
Rapporteur: Ms. Diane McFadzien – Cook Islands)

Thursday, 11 April 2002

0900 – 1030	Continuation of working group sessions
1030 – 1050	Coffee break
1050 – 1300	Working group sessions
1300 – 1400	Lunch
1400 – 1600	Working group sessions
1600 – 1620	Coffee break
1620 – 1800	Working Group sessions to prepare conclusions

Friday, 12 April 2002

0900 – 0930	Guidance for working groups to consider the draft revised guidelines for the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties *(Mr. Philip Weech - Chairman of the CGE)*
0930 – 1030	Working group sessions to consider draft revised guidelines
1030 – 1050	Coffee break
1050 – 1300	Working group sessions
1300 – 1400	Lunch
1400 – 1500	Working group sessions
1500 – 1640	Report writing: drafting groups, comprising the coordinators and rapporteurs of the working groups and staff of the UNFCCC secretariat, will draft the report of the session
1640 – 1700	Coffee break

PLENARY II

1700 – 1730	Presentations of conclusions by working groups
1730 – 1800	Consideration and adoption of the workshop report *(Chairman of the CGE)*

Annex II

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